

# 2015–16 Puget Sound Fishing Prospects



Puget Sound consists of sheltered, scenic waters from Sekiu north to Blaine and south to Olympia, offering ample opportunities to fish by boat or from shore. Anglers can also fish in the rivers and lake systems that feed into Puget Sound. For more information on how, when, and where to catch fish, go to: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/washington/>.

**Pink salmon** (humpy) have white mouths with black gum lines and almost no teeth. These fish have large oval spots on their backs and tails and very small scales. They do not have silver on their tails.

A large run of pinks, which peaks in mid-August of odd-numbered years, is forecast to return to Hood Canal and the Dungeness, Nooksack, Skagit, Snohomish, Green, Puyallup and Nisqually rivers. Pinks can be caught flyfishing from shore or by using buzz bombs or jigs. Boat anglers should troll with small pink hoochies at a fairly shallow depth (20-80 feet).



**Coho salmon** (silver) have light-colored mouths with white gum lines and medium-sized, sharp teeth. Coho have spots on their backs and on the upper lobe of their tails, along with silver streaks on their tails.

Strong runs of coho are likely in most marine areas, including the Strait of Juan de Fuca, mid-Puget Sound, South Sound, and Hood Canal. The peak return is expected in September. Coho can be caught flyfishing from shore or by using buzz bombs, jigs or cut-plugs. Boat anglers should troll faster with white hoochies or cut-plugs.



**Chinook salmon** (king) have dark mouths and black gum lines with sharp teeth. Chinook have spots on their backs and on both lobes of their tails, along with silver streaks on their tails.

Fishing for summer Chinook typically starts in July, when anglers can also hook pink salmon. Anglers should try fishing on the bottom for winter Chinook (blackmouth) from October through April. Find out where Chinook are biting by checking WDFW's online fishing reports at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/creel/puget/>.



**Sockeye salmon** (red) have white mouths and white gum lines with almost no teeth. Sockeye have no spots on their backs or tails and have large, bright gold eyes.

Openings for sockeye include the Skagit River, from mid-June to mid-July; Baker Lake, from mid-July through August; and in marine areas 5, 6, and 7 in August.

**Chum salmon** (dog) have white mouths and gum lines and pronounced teeth. Chum have no spots on their backs or tails but have a white tip on their anal fins and calico-colored markings, or vertical bars, on their bodies.

The run of chum is expected to reach peak in October in marine areas 10, 11, 12, and 13. Anglers can also fish for chum in south Sound and Hood Canal rivers. Use a bobber and anchovy set-up.



Visit <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/salmon/identification.html>

## Bottomfish

Most areas are open for bottomfish, however, Marine Area 12 (Hood Canal) is closed to fishing for bottomfish. For more information on bottomfish, visit <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/bottomfish/>.

**Flounder/sole:** Year-round with easiest fishing July-September as they move to the flats.

**Halibut:** Typically runs mid-May to mid-June on specific days. Try fishing northern parts of the Sound.

**Lingcod:** Typically runs mid-May to mid-June.

**Rockfish:** Closed with the exception of a limited black/blue rockfish season in Marine Area 5. Use a descending device when releasing rockfish.

## Trout and other Gamefish

**Sea-run Coastal Cutthroat:** Open year-round for catch and release fishing only. The best fishing is in late fall through spring with great opportunities in marine areas 11, 12, and 13.

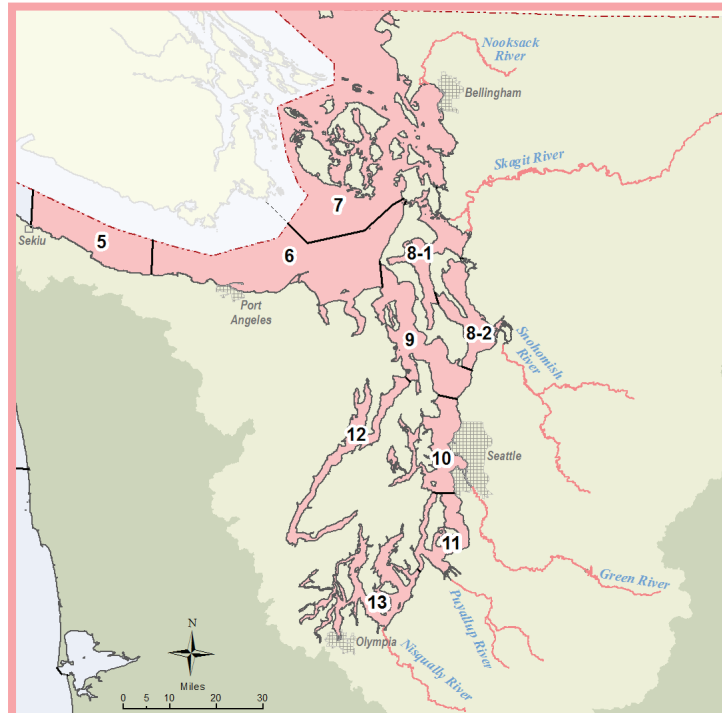
**Steelhead:** Try the Skykomish River during the summer season and from shore in marine areas 8-1 and 9 for hatchery fish during the winter.

**Trout:** Most river systems and lakes have good opportunities for rainbow trout and kokanee.

**Warmwater species:** Bass, sunfish, crappie, and perch can be caught in most lakes.

## Shellfish

Information about crab, shrimp and squid can be found online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish/>.



## 2015 is a Pink Salmon Year!! Fish them on the Fly...

Pink salmon return every other year, usually in high numbers. In the summer of 2015, roughly 6.8 million pink salmon are expected to return to Puget Sound and several rivers, creating a great opportunity to catch a lot of fish. This year's general daily bag limit in saltwater is two salmon, plus two additional pinks.

Beginning in late July, updated creel reports – which indicate where the best fishing is taking place – will appear online at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/creel/puget/>.

Pinks tend to hug the shoreline. Locations throughout Puget Sound where they can be caught from shore include: Deception Pass, Dash Point State Park, Dash Point Tacoma City Park, Faye Bainbridge, Fort Casey, Golden Gardens, Hoodsport, Point No Point, Point Wilson, and Kayak Point. For more information on locations to try catching these salmon, go to: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/washington/>.

Rivers with pink salmon runs to consider fishing include: Nooksack, Snohomish, Skykomish, Snoqualmie, Skagit, Green, Puyallup, and Nisqually.

Remember to buy either an annual saltwater, combination, or freshwater license – depending on where you fish. Also, be sure to fill out and return your salmon catch record card.

Believe it or not, pink salmon actually do like pink-colored flies.

